United Nations

Daily Highlights

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F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- Secretary-General, in Paris, meets with French President François Mitterrand for talks on summit meeting of the Security Council to be held on 31 January in New York.

- Libya officially requests a special session of General Assembly to discuss international terrorism.

- New six-month plan of action for humanitarian assistance to Iraq, estimated at $145.2 million, announced by Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator.

- Colonel John Wilson of Australia to head 50-member United Nations military liaison team in Yugoslavia.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met today in Paris with President François Mitterrand of France with whom he discussed the forthcoming summit of the Security Council, to be held on 31 January in New York.

The Secretary-General left New York for Europe yesterday, on a working visit to France and the United Kingdom, for discussions with those two countries' leaders on a wide range of issues, including Yugoslavia, Cambodia and the forthcoming summit of the 15-member Security Council.

Earlier today, the Secretary-General met with Mr. Bernard Kouchner, French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Action, for talks on the question of coordination of humanitarian action under United Nations auspices. They discussed in particular humanitarian assistance operations in Yugoslavia, Somalia and in other parts of the world.

The Secretary-General then met with Director-General of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Frederico Mayor for a discussion of the role of that Agency in education programmes around the world, specifically in view of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June.

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For information media—not an official record

Mr. Boutros-Ghali will meet French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas tomorrow.

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Libya has requested a special session of the General Assembly to discuss what it called "the danger posed by the phenomenon of international terrorism to international peace and security and a number of other grave issues of concern to all nations".

The Libyan Government's request, dated 8 January, which was transmitted to the Secretary-General in a letter signed by the Libyan Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ali Ahmed Elhoudeiri, reaffirmed its condemnation of terrorism in all forms and pointed out that Libya had taken the initiative in order to "first reach a definition of international terrorism and then to eliminate it and the underlying causes of all those forms or terrorism and acts of violence to which the world is prone...".

At a press briefing at Headquarters yesterday, Ambassador Elhoudeiri referred to charges by Britain, France and the United States that two Libyan nationals were involved in the destruction of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, and their request for Security Council involvement with the matter. The Libyan Ambassador told correspondents that his country saw no need for Security Council involvement, asserting that the attempt by the three countries to involve the Council had changed the nature of the matter from a legal to a political one.

He said, however, that his country sought a just and truthful resolution to the matter and would continue to welcome any "initiative that could assist in diffusing the escalating tensions" between his country and the three Council members.

According to a United Nations spokeswoman today, the Secretary-General has written to all Member States requesting that they inform him within thirty days whether their Governments concurred with the request for convening the special session, which she said would require a simple majority of the membership.

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The United Nations has released a new six-month plan of action for a continued humanitarian assistance to Iraq, at an estimated cost of $145.2 million, according to a report by the Geneva-based Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO).

Focusing on the most basic needs of populations at risk, the plan will be officially presented to donor governments representatives in Geneva on 13 January. It includes, among other things, assistance to displaced persons in the north and the south of Iraq, vulnerable groups in Iraq and refugees remaining in Iran, and continued presence of United Nations guards for protection of supplied materials and personnel.

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UNDRO reported that heavy snowstorms in the north of Iraq last week had delayed returns of refugees from Turkey and Iran. However, the Agency said, the security situation in northern Iraq remained stable. Discussions among the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Iraqi Government and others regarding medium/long term development aid in Iraq were ongoing. It was hoped that this process would facilitate smooth transition from emergency relief operations to a programme of rehabilitation for the most affected populations.

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Colonel John Wilson of Australia, Deputy Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO), has been named Senior Military Liaison Officer of the 50-member military liaison team to Yugoslavia, authorized by the Security Council on Wednesday.

Announcing the appointment today, a United Nations spokeswoman explained the role of the group, saying it was neither an observer mission nor a monitoring mission. Its mandate was to liaise with the Yugoslav Federal Army and the Croatian National Guard on the maintenance of the cease-fire. The deployment of the group would take place early next week, she said.

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